Operations by private airlines

1359. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of private airlines, which have sought Government's approval to start operations in the domestic aviation industry; and

(b) the action taken to consider their proposals early and issue "No Objection Certificates"?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Consideration of proposals for private airlines for grant of "No Objection Certificate" to start air operations is an ongoing process. At present proposal of 4 private airlines to start non-scheduled air services and 2 private airlines to start scheduled air services are under process in this Ministry.

Airports in Gujarat

1360. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether various political organisations and public representatives of Gujarat have made requests to Government for setting up more airports in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No, proposals have been received by the Government for setting up more airports in Gujarat.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Merger of AI and IA

†1361. SHRI D. P. YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to merge Air India and Indian Airlines;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(b) if so, by when such process would be completed; and

(c) the countries to which Air India and Indian Airlines have introduced new flights during the year 2001-2002?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Air India and Indian Airlines have introduced the following new flights on international network during the year 2001-2002:—

Air India : Mumbai/Kolkata/Guwahati/Bangkok and Mumbai/Kuwait/Al-Ain/Kozhikode.

Indian Airlines: Hyderabad-Dubai, Hyderabad-Bangkok, Trivandrum-Sharjah, Jaipur-Dubai, Delhi-Dubai, Calicut-Muscat, Calicut-Dubai, Cochin-Doha/Bahrain and Chennai-Dubai.

Upgradation of In-flight facilities

1362. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to renovate cabines with seats that can be converted into flat beds and provide other facilities with a view to upgrade in-flight facilities in Air India flights particularly to U.S. and Europe;

(b) if so, the total amount to be spent on renovation; and

(c) how long this renovation is likely to take and by when the work is likely to commence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir. Air India had decided to replace the existing seats in first class of all the six B747-400 aircraft in the fleet with seats that can be reclined to 180 degrees. Air India has also decided to provide portable Digital Video Diskette (DVD) players.

(b) The estimated expenditure for replacement of first class seats on all the six B747-400 aircraft in Air India's fleet (including DVD players) is approximately Rs. 8.5 crores.